

SELECTMEN'S MINUTES MONDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2016

The Selectmen's meeting for Monday, December 19, 2016 started at 6:30 p.m. Present were Selectman Ayer, Selectman Gaudiello, Selectman Hatch, Selectman Knapp, Chairman O'Brien, Administrator Scruton and Clerk McNeil.

Chairman O'Brien welcomed everyone and led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman O'Brien opened the public hearing to accept and expend funds from the Conservation Fund for the protection of the Barr property at 6:31 p.m. John Wallace noted that the Barr property is on Seavey Bridge Road with 4800' of frontage on the Isinglass River. The Barrington trail runs along this property. The daughter of John and Ruth Barr has agreed to sell a conservation easement. Money had been received from LCHIP and another grant. The Conservation Comm. has already voted to support up to \$110,000 from the Conservation Fund (Land Use Change Taxes). Administrator Scruton noted that the town may need an easement on that property for the construction and repair of the Green Hill Bridge. There will be a parking area on the Barr property off of Seavey Bridge Road. Chair O'Brien asked about parking at the BYA fields at the beginning of the Barrington Trail. Nothing has been set up formally with the BYA. SELT (South East Land Trust) would hold the easement with the town being executory. Duane Hyde from SELT stated that the town would maintain the trail and the monitoring would be done by SELT. The cost of a parking area would come from Conservation Fund money. Public comment – Doug Bogen stated that he has walked the trail several times and supports the easement. Matt Carpenter, a town resident, who works for Fish and Game spoke of the fishing opportunities and supported this project and the trails committee. Jason Bryant lives on Seavey Bridge Road and also supports the easement. He fishes in the Isinglass, walks the trails and taught his children to swim in the Isinglass. Selectman Gaudiello asked about what is left in the Conservation Fund -\$390,000. However, there are two projects that are going to use some of the money. Selectman Gaudiello moved to approve the expenditure of up to \$110,000 from the Conservation Fund towards the purchase of the conservation easement on 54 acres of the Barr property, seconded by Selectman Knapp. It was unanimously voted in the affirmative. Selectman Ayer moved to accept and expend \$150,000 expected from the New Hampshire Land and Community Heritage Investment Program to be used towards the purchase of a conservation easement on 54 acres of the Barr property (219-0045), seconded by Selectman Gaudiello. It was unanimously voted in the affirmative. The public hearing closed at 6:46 p.m.

Duane Hyde from SELT brought the Board up to date on the purchase of Stonehouse Forest Conservation Easement. Approximately 64% of the funds have been raised. They are waiting to hear about a large grant. They have until the end of September, 2017 to close on the property.

Chairman O'Brien opened the bids that were received for Map 223 Lot 0022. Selectman Ayer excused himself from this discussion. One bid was received and it came as an email with a copy of the 10% deposit attached. The bid was received from Joe Falzone in the amount of \$1,500 with a deposit of \$150. The final decision will be made after the final public hearing and vote on January 2nd. Chairman O'Brien opened the public hearing under the provisions of RSA 41:14a regarding authorization for this sale with an anticipated vote on January 2nd at 6:40 p.m. Chairman O'Brien asked if there was any public comment. John Wallace stated that the Conservation Commission

weighed in on the sale of this property. They noted that the property is very wet with a prime wetland nearby. The Conservation Comm. does not support the sale due to the impact on this wetland. The public hearing closed at 6:54.

APPOINTMENTS

Members of the American Legion were present to ask the Board to present a warrant article to change the current veteran's credit, per RSA 72:28-b to include all veterans. The assessor feels that there would be a \$100,000 tax impact. Administrator Scruton asked the Board if they were going to put an article in the warrant. Selectman Knapp supports this article. Selectman Gaudiello feels that the Board is trying to keep the budget down and any tax credit means that other tax-payers have to make up difference. Chairman O'Brien agrees with Selectman Gaudiello and would like to see the American Legion place a petition article on the warrant if they wish to pursue the expansion of the credit. Selectman Knapp moved to support the Selectmen putting an article on the warrant that all veterans receive the tax credit, seconded by Selectman Ayer. Chairman O'Brien asked for a roll call, Ayer – aye, Knapp – aye, Gaudiello – nay, Hatch – nay, O'Brien – nay. The motion does not pass.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ann Melvin a retired clinical social worker who has worked for the VA knows the physical and mental issues that veterans deal with. She feels this change in the tax credit would honor all veterans.

Steve Saunders encouraged the Board to accept public comments about the budget during the budget discussion that is coming at this meeting.

Paul Silver, Commander of the American Legion, would like to see the change in the veteran's credit go to the voters as the merits have already been discussed at the State level by our State Representatives. Mr. Silver feels that any veteran that serves whether in Paris Island or in the Middle East should receive this honor.

George Bailey, a member of the American Legion, stated that he conducts the American Legion funeral ceremonies. The State passed this RSA, so the issue is now State law. He hopes the Board supports the article. Administrator Scruton clarified that the state cannot require the expansion of the credit as it would be an unfunded mandate. The state law allows towns to expand the credit at town meeting since it is the local residents who will pay for it.

John Wallace – Topaz Road culvert – it may be possible that the town could be the applicant without putting up any town funds.

It was suggested that a town forest task force be established. The volunteer position for members has been advertised and no one has come forward. Selectman Ayer knows several people who might have an interest. Selectman Gaudiello asked who would monitor this new committee. More information will be gathered. There would need to be a warrant article in order to have the Con. Commission take over management of the town forest.

Marcia Gasses stated that she has looked into a town wide mailing to advertise the zoning changes. She would like the Board's input as it could add up to be \$1200 or \$1500 total cost for a town wide mailing. The newspaper public notice that is required alone will cost \$800. It was suggested to have links on the town's website. Selectman Gaudiello suggested using the town's resources and then

include the proposed zoning changes in the town's final mailing before Deliberative Session. The rest of the Board concurred with this approach.

Pam Failing, member of the Conservation Commission, gave the Board the history of the town forest project. Matt Carpenter had offered to work on the town forest project after Bob Edmonds moved but he was more interested in the town conservation as a whole. Mr. Carpenter feels the town forest should come under the Conservation Commission.

Ann Melvin supported the town forest project.

REVIEW OF MINUTES – December 12, 2017 – Selectman Knapp moved to accept the minutes of December 12, 2017, seconded by Selectman Hatch. Selectman Gaudiello abstained from the vote as she did not attend that meeting. The motion passes.

STAFF REPORT

1. Administrator Scruton noted the request from the Conservation Commission to merge several properties into the SATWaSr Property. John Wallace will check with the Forest Society to make sure there is no problem with merging these properties. The discussion was tabled until January 2nd.
2. Default Budget – Selectman Knapp had some questions on “one time” items in the default budget. Administrator Scruton stated that the default budget is meant to deliver the same level of service as the prior year with a few minor adjustments. Selectman Ayer feels that a police cruiser is not needed in the default budget, while Selectman Gaudiello disagreed and explained why we need to continue our cruiser replacement schedule. Increases in NHRS and health insurance should be added back into the Default Budget along with salary increases for the first three months of 2016.
3. It was noted that Paul Sanders is still researching the water issue at the public safety building.
4. The Software Committee went out to bid for new software. They would like to purchase the Avitar system for the town clerk, tax collector, building and budgetary functions. This would be paid for out of the incident line at a cost of \$29,950. Selectman Gaudiello moved to purchase the Avitar system in the amount of \$29,950 with the excess cost covered by other department underspending, seconded by Selectman Hatch. The tax collector and town clerk support this change. It was unanimously voted in the affirmative.

OLD BUSINESS

Review of the proposed 2017 Budget –

Executive Incident – Selectman Knapp moved to reduce the executive incident fund to \$75,000, seconded by Chairman O'Brien. It was unanimously voted in the affirmative.

Town Clerk – Part-time clerk from 29 hours to 34 hours. This would add \$7,600 to the budget. Selectman Gaudiello moved to support this addition to the town clerk's budget, seconded by Selectman Hatch. Chairman O'Brien asked for a roll call, Ayer – nay, Gaudiello – aye, Hatch – aye, Knapp – aye, O'Brien – aye. The motion passes. Town Clerk

Equipment – Selectman Hatch moved to reduce this line down to \$2,700, seconded by Selectman Gaudiello. It was unanimously voted in the affirmative.

Land Use Postage - It was suggested that anything over and above come out of incident fund. Selectman Gaudiello moved to reduce this line to \$1,500, seconded by Selectman Ayer. It was unanimously voted in the affirmative. Land Use Forest and Trails and

Easements – It was asked if money for these lines could come out of the Conservation Fund

- \$2,700. John Wallace noted that the Board had cut the monitoring easement line in half several years ago – so some of the easements don't get monitored. He feels that this money should come out of the town's budget. The Conservation Commission would like to save the Conservation Fund money for purchase of easements and not monitoring. Chairman O'Brien moved to put \$1 in the easement monitoring line instead of \$2200, seconded by Selectman Knapp. Selectman Gaudiello would like to keep \$500 in forest and trails line. It was unanimously voted in the affirmative.

General Government Buildings – Selectman Ayer moved to cut the heating oil line down \$10,000 to \$25,000, seconded by Selectman Gaudiello. It was unanimously voted in the affirmative.

Government Building Maintenance – Selectman Gaudiello moved to cut \$7,000 out of the budget, which would be the building improvement for the administrative assistant at the public safety building, seconded by Selectman Ayer. It was unanimously voted in the affirmative.

Vehicle Fuels – Selectman Ayer moved to reduce this line by \$15,000 to \$75,000, seconded by Selectman Knapp. It was unanimously voted in the affirmative. Chairman O'Brien moved to remove the key system (\$10,000) from the General Government Building and place it in the Police budget under Police Equipment (4210-01-4749), seconded by Selectman Ayer. Chief Williams explained security concerns to support this. It was unanimously voted in the affirmative.

Fire Department - Selectman Gaudiello moved to eliminate the administrative assistant position in the amount of \$13,000 from the budget, seconded by Selectman Ayer. It was unanimously voted in the affirmative.

Fire Department Emergency Management Grant – this is for a sign that would be used by highway, police and fire. Chief Williams noted that this affects him the most however the grant was included in the Fire Department budget as it is an Emergency Management Grant. Chief Walker noted that he has seen the unit and he was very impressed. It is a tool for the town including Emergency Management. Peter Cook noted that it could be used for road counts instead of using the engineering firm. It was decided to retain this item in the budget. Building Inspection Equipment - Chairman O'Brien moved to leave only \$500 in the budget, if something is needed it could come from the incident fund, seconded by Selectman Knapp. It was unanimously voted in the affirmative. Highway Department Overtime – Selectman Gaudiello moved to reduce this line by \$10,000, seconded by Chairman O'Brien. The Winter Emergency Expendable Trust could be used if necessary. It was unanimously voted in the affirmative.

Highway Paved Roads – Chairman O'Brien moved to take \$40,000 out of \$750,000, as it is already in the rental line, seconded by Selectman Knapp. It was unanimously voted in the affirmative.

Transfer Recycling lines need to be properly allocated – recycling to \$25,000 and electronics to \$16,000. Selectman Gaudiello moved to support those changes, seconded by Selectman Knapp. It was unanimously voted in the affirmative.

Bulky Waste Disposal to stay at \$60,000.

Revaluation Contracts – Selectman Gaudiello moved to reduce this line to \$47,000, seconded by Selectman Knapp. It was unanimously voted in the affirmative.

Selectman Knapp's budget recommendations:

Recreation - the original warrant article stated the Recreation Department would be a self-funded department. He feels the town should pay the salary and benefits for the recreation

director out of the operating budget and remaining two members of the staff currently paid from the operating budget should come out of the Revolving Fund. Selectman Knapp feels this would be a starting point to get them on track to be self-funded as stated in the warrant article. Chairman O'Brien felt that you can't "shock" them with this recommendation. Selectman Gaudiello feels that they could contribute more based on how much the office staff are program related, but that there should be a transition period for any change. The Board directed Administrator Scruton to ask the Recreation Director to provide information on the percentage of time the AA and Assistant Director spend on program-related activities.

Selectman Knapp asked about funding the Swains Dam account in case there is a disaster. Peter Cook stated that HTE Northeast Inc. had done the work on the gate. He asked them for a quote to complete a study on the dam and note if there are any "red flags".

Warrant Articles –

Transfer Station Yard Paving – Selectman Knapp moved to cut the paving warrant article, seconded by Selectman Ayer. It was unanimously voted in the affirmative.

Bridge Capital Reserve – Selectman Gaudiello moved to increase this capital reserve to \$75,000 with the money coming out of fund balance, seconded by Selectman Ayer. It was unanimously voted in the affirmative.

Non-Lapsing Roads Warrant Article in the amount of \$125,000 to come out of fund balance.

Public Safety Building Paving – Selectman Ayer moved to take this money out of the budget, seconded by Selectman Knapp. It was unanimously voted in the affirmative.

Cemetery Expansion - \$4,000 – this money will come out of fund balance.

Fire Safety Storage Building – Chairman O'Brien moved to support \$25,000 in this article and take the money out of fund balance, seconded by Selectman Ayer. It was unanimously voted in the affirmative.

Young Road Culvert FEMA – Selectman Knapp moved to support the \$347,080 with money coming from fund balance and FEMA, seconded by Chairman O'Brien. It was unanimously voted in the affirmative.

Software Financial – Selectman Gaudiello moved to increase this line to \$100,000 and fund it with fund balance, seconded by Selectman Ayer. It was unanimously voted in the affirmative.

Library Technology Upgrade – Chairman O'Brien moved to support \$3,000 in the article with the money to come out of fund balance, seconded by Selectman Hatch. It was unanimously voted in the affirmative.

Winter/Road Emergency – Selectman Knapp moved to reduce this article to \$25,000 with the money coming out of fund balance, seconded by Selectman Ayer. Chairman O'Brien asked for a roll call, Ayer – aye, Gaudiello – nay, Hatch – aye, Knapp – aye, O'Brien – aye. The motion passes.

Compactor Maintenance CR – Selectman Gaudiello moved to support this article in the amount of \$25,000 with the money coming out of fund balance, seconded by Selectman Ayer. It was unanimously voted in the affirmative.

Highway Equipment CR – Selectman Gaudiello moved to support \$60,000 out of fund balance, seconded by Selectman Ayer. It was unanimously voted in the affirmative.

Fire Truck Capital Reserve – Selectman Gaudiello moved to support \$50,000 out of fund balance, seconded by Selectman Hatch. It was unanimously voted in the affirmative.

Fire & Rescue Capital Equipment – Selectman Knapp moved to cut the funding for this capital reserve, seconded by Selectman Gaudiello. It was unanimously voted in the affirmative.

Communication Upgrade – Selectman Gaudiello moved to support this article in the amount of \$25,000 with the money coming out of fund balance, seconded by Selectman Ayer. It was unanimously voted in the affirmative.

Clerk McNeil

Clerk McNeil requested signatures on the following: one application for current use for Bolstridge, abatement #35, Intent to Cut for Travis Gay, Equalization Certificate, Payroll Manifest dated 12/11/2016 and Vendor Manifest dated 12/14/2016

SELECTMEN'S REPORT

Selectman Hatch stated that she has three meetings this week – Selectman, Library Trustees and Zoning Board of Adjustment.

Selectman Ayer stated that Planning Board is finished for the year. Marcia Gasses reminded everyone that the public hearing for the zoning amendments is on January 3rd with a snow date of January 10th.

Selectman Knapp noted that the School Board was meeting with their ABC. He is sorry that he can't attend Planning Board meetings as he is attending School Board meetings on the same night.

Chairman O'Brien thanked all of the volunteers who helped with the Christmas Basket distribution on Saturday during the snowstorm.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Steve Saunders asked the Board if they would like input from the ABC regarding the 2017 budget process. The consensus of the Board was yes.

Paul Mausteller suggested that layouts and reestablishments be cut in the Highway Budget. It was explained that a lot still need to be done and this money needs to stay in the budget. The plan for the expenditures for next year was explained.

He suggested that the Board reconsider their opinion of the Veteran's Tax Credit Warrant Article

Meeting adjourned at 10:48 p.m.